

RAW MARSH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



THE MEDICAL OFFICER'S
ANNUAL REPORT,
FOR THE YEAR 1895.

BY

JAS. PICKEN, M.B., C.M.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

ROTHERHAM :

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ANNUAL REPORT, 1895.

To the Chairman and Members of the Rawmarsh Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

For the second year in succession I have the pleasure of reporting a low death-rate. Although 0·6 higher than in 1894, when the mortality was unusually low, the death-rate of 16·11 per thousand inhabitants for 1895 is very satisfactory, and is 2·6 lower than the average rate for England and Wales. This rate is even more satisfactory, when the birth-rate of 39·93 per thousand inhabitants for the parish is compared with that of 30·3 for England and Wales. Still the 207 deaths recorded for the year doubtless include not a few avoidable ones due to causes which might be removed or prevented by your utilising more fully the powers vested in you by the sanitary laws.

Building operations were much less active during the year, only 27 dwelling-houses having been erected, against 48 in 1894. Twenty-one, or three-fourths of them, were erected in Rawmarsh, and six in Parkgate, as compared with 30 and 18 respectively during the previous year.

The estimated population is 12,980.

HOUSES, POPULATION, &c.

	RAWMARSH.	PARKGATE.	WHOLE PARISH.
Acreage, 1891			2549
Acreage, 1895			2549
Number of Houses built and occupied during 1895	21	6	27
Number of Houses at the end of 1895	1065	1418	2483
Population at Census, 1891	4907	7076	11983
Population estimated to middle of 1895	5315	7530	12845
Population estimated to middle of 1896	5420	7560	12980

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

Five hundred and thirteen births (275 males and 238 females) were registered during the year, being 40 more than in 1894, and giving a birth-rate of 39·93 per thousand inhabitants against 37·58 for 1894.

TABLE I.

Showing the births and birth-rate for the year for each district and for the whole parish.

DISTRICT.	POPULA- TION.	BIRTHS.			Birth Rate per 1000 per Annum
		MALES.	FEMALES	TOTAL.	
Rawmarsh...	5315	102	91	193	36·31
Parkgate ...	7530	173	147	320	43·82
Whole parish	12845	275	238	513	39·93

TABLE II.

Showing the births and birth-rate for the Parish for each quarter, and for the whole year.

QUARTER.	BIRTHS.	BIRTH RATE PER 1000 PER ANNUM.
First quarter	125	38·53
Second „	137	42·66
Third „	134	41·70
Fourth „	117	36·43
Whole year	513	39·93

DEATHS.

Two hundred and seven deaths (112 males and 95 females) were registered during the year, being 12 more than in 1894, and giving a death-rate of 16·11 per thousand inhabitants against 15·49 for 1894.

There is a considerable increase in the mortality of infants under one year. Ninety were registered, against 71 during the previous year, giving an infant mortality of 7 per thousand inhabitants, and equal to 175 per 1000 births registered against 150 for 1894. One hundred and twenty-two died under five years of age, being 14 more than during the previous year, and giving a death-rate of 9·4 per 1000 inhabitants, equal to 58 per cent. of the total number of deaths, against 55 per cent. recorded for 1894.

Twenty-four deaths were registered of persons aged 65 and upwards. The aggregate ages of 17 of these aged 70 and upwards amounted to 1324 years, giving an average of nearly 78 years.

The mortality from Bronchitis and Pneumonia is the lowest I have had to record, being at the rate of 1·7 per 1000 inhabitants against 2·7 for the previous year. Nine deaths are referred to Bronchitis and 14 to Pneumonia, against 19 and 15 respectively for 1894. The parish was remarkably free from these diseases during the long and memorable frost of the first quarter ; indeed I cannot remember any period of cold weather in which so few young children and old people who are specially susceptible were attacked. They became prevalent after the break up of the frost, and 11 deaths—one-half of the total for the year—from them occurred during the months of April, May, and June. Four children under five years died of the one disease and eight of the other during the year, a decrease of 12 and 2 respectively as compared with the previous year.

The Phthisis death rate for the year is 1·4 per 1000 inhabitants against 1·1 for 1894.

There is a considerable increase in the number of deaths from the principal Zymotic diseases, 48 being recorded against 29 for 1894, and giving a Zymotic death-rate of 3·7 per 1000 inhabitants against 2·3 for the previous year. The rise in this rate is mainly due to the increased number of deaths referred to Diarrhoea as compared with 1894, when the deaths from this cause were much below the average.

The lowest quarterly death-rates occurred in the first and fourth quarters of the year, when they are generally highest, the lowest—11·21 per 1000 inhabitants—being recorded during the last quarter as in 1884, when it was 12·71.

TABLE III.

Showing the Deaths and Death-rate for the year for each District and for the whole Parish.

DISTRICT.	POPULATION.	DEATHS.			DEATH RATE PER 1000 PER ANNUM.
		MALES.	F' MALS	TOT'LS	
Rawmarsh ...	5315	48	43	91	17·12
Parkgate	7530	64	52	116	15·40
Whole Parish ...	12845	112	95	207	16·11

TABLE IV.

Showing the Deaths and Death-rate for the Parish for each quarter, and for the whole year.

QUARTER.	DEATHS.	DEATH-RATE PER 1000 PER ANNUM.
First Quarter.....	51	15·88
Second ,,	52	16·14
Third ,,	68	21·17
Fourth ,,	36	11·21
Whole year	207	16·11

TABLE V.

Showing the Diseases to which the 207 Deaths are attributed, the district in which they occurred, and the number referred to each Disease.

DISEASES.		Raw-marsh.	Parkgate	Whole Parish.
Small-pox		—	—	—
Scarlet Fever.....		6	1	7
Diphtheria		—	2	2
Croup		2	3	5
FEVERS	Typhus	—	—	—
	Typhoid.....	1	1	2
	Puerperal.....	—	—	—
Cholera		—	—	—
Erysipelas		1	—	1
Measles		1	2	3
Whooping Cough		—	5	5
Diarrhœa and Dysentery...		11	13	24
Rheumatic Fever		1	—	1
Ague		—	—	—
Phthisis		7	11	18
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and		9	14	23
Heart Disease [Pleurisy		5	5	10
Injuries		4	3	7
All other Diseases.....		43	56	99
Influenza.....		—	—	—
Total		91	116	207

TABLE VI.

Showing the age at which the 207 Deaths occurred.

	Rawmarsh.	Parkgate.	Whole Parish.
Under 1 Year.....	40	50	90
1 and under 5	14	18	32
5 ,, 15	6	10	16
15 ,, 25	4	2	6
25 ,, 65	18	21	39
65 and upwards	9	15	24
Total	91	116	207

TABLE VII.

Showing the Monthly Mortality.

	Total Deaths.				Zymotic Diseases.		Bronchitis, Pneumonia & Pleurisy.		Phthisis.
	Under 5 years.	5 years and under 65.	65 years and upwards.	Total.	Under 5 years.	5 years and upwards.	Under 5 years.	5 years and upwards.	
January	9	10	3	22	3	1	0	3	1
February	9	4	3	16	0	1	1	0	0
March	8	3	2	13	1	0	0	1	1
April	12	4	3	19	4	0	2	2	2
May.....	6	8	3	17	1	1	1	1	2
June.....	7	8	1	16	1	1	4	1	3
July	9	2	4	15	3	0	1	2	2
August	14	8	0	22	4	1	0	0	2
September ...	25	6	0	31	13	1	0	0	3
October	7	3	3	13	4	1	0	1	1
November ...	8	2	2	12	3	0	2	0	1
December ...	8	3	0	11	4	0	1	0	0
Total...	122	61	24	207	41	7	12	11	18

TABLE VIII.

The following tabular statement shows the Zymotic Diseases referred to, and the number of deaths and rates of mortality caused by them in each district during the years 1894 and 1895.

	1895.			1894.		
	Raw-marsh.	Park-gate.	Whole Parish	Raw-marsh.	Park-gate.	Whole Parish
Cholera	—	—	—	—	—	—
Small Pox.....	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlatina.....	6	1	7	5	3	8
Measles.....	1	2	3	—	2	2
Diphtheria.....	—	2	2	—	2	2
Croup	2	3	5	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	5	5	2	3	5
Typhoid Fever...	1	1	2	3	—	3
Diarrhœa	11	13	24	2	7	9
Total	21	27	48	12	17	29
Zymotic death rate per 1000 per annum	3·95	3·58	3·73	2·32	2·28	2·3

TABLE IX.

Showing the natural increase in the population by Births over Deaths.

	Rawmarsh.	Parkgate.	Whole Parish.
Births	193	320	513
Deaths.....	91	116	207
Increase	102	204	306

SICKNESS.

SMALL POX.—One case of small pox was reported during the year, the patient, a professional singer contracted the disease at Ripley. She arrived here by train from Barnsley where she had stayed six days, on the 9th June, and the eruption had appeared on her face before she left the latter place. In the house at Parkgate where she stayed on the 9th were a husband and wife, three children (two of whom were unvaccinated), and a servant girl. The sufferer slept in the same bed with the mother and baby. I immediately removed her to the Hospital, vaccinated all the inmates of the house and removed them also to a detached part of the Hospital where they were kept in quarantine for 16 days. The infected house was thoroughly cleansed. No other case occurred.

SCARLET FEVER.—Although cases of Scarlet Fever had occurred in every month of 1894, it had not been epidemic for several years, and consequently there were a great many children in the Parish susceptible to this disease. During the first half of 1895 there were 32 at Parkgate and 6 at Rawmarsh. Of 14 that came to my knowledge in May, I traced the origin of one half to children whose illness had not been notified as they had not been medically attended. During the second half of the year 55 were reported at Parkgate and 139 at Rawmarsh including 27 at the outlying districts of Ryecroft, Sandhill, Meadow Works, and Warrenvale. I have no doubt Dale Road Schools, especially the Girls' school, was the chief centre for spreading it at Rawmarsh. Scholars attending there were the first attacked in a great majority of the houses, and became new centres in different parts and sometimes in widely separated parts of the district. In one household in an isolated street the only child who contracted the disease was a scholar of the Girls' School while the other members of the family who attended at a Parkgate school escaped. The disease appeared in some instances shortly after returning to school after a few weeks absence, and in one case after a four days attendance for the first time. The suspected schools were closed for nearly three weeks at Christmas and since they were opened there has been a rapid reduction in the number of cases traceable to them. The epidemic was mild in type and of 233 cases reported for the year 7 died. Four were removed to the Hospital.

MEASLES.—This disease appeared in the Rawmarsh and Parkgate districts about the middle of November, 1894, and continued throughout December, but was not very prevalent. The first cases, both at Ryecroft and Sandhill, occurred shortly before Christmas, 1894, and were in children who

attended the Boys' National School, Dale road. Nearly all the children at Ryecroft and Sandhill attend the Ryecroft Board School and the Boys' and Girls' Schools, Dale road. From many families some of the children attended the former, and others the latter schools. From the latter as centres it seemed to have been introduced to the Ryecroft School and reintroduced from there to the Dale Road Schools by brothers and sisters of the Ryecroft scholars. Up to the middle of February 106 children were attacked in 60 houses. The Board School being entirely an infant one suffered much more severely in proportion to the number of scholars than the other schools. They were nearly equally distributed over Ryecroft and Sandhill, only a few were medically attended, and the epidemic was well advanced before your officers were aware of its existence. The Board School was closed on the 25th Jan., and the epidemic rapidly declined. During the month of May a considerable number of children were attacked at Parkgate, and on inquiry I found it had spread from the Aldwarke Road National School. Only three deaths were referred to the disease during the year.

WHOOPING COUGH.—A good many children suffered from whooping cough during October, November, and December, and five deaths were due to it.

DIARRHŒA.—Diarrhœa was prevalent during July, August, and September. The high death rate for September was due to the number of deaths from this disease, 13 having died from it, and all children under two years of age. Twenty-four deaths were referred to it during the year, and 22 of them were of children under five years of age.

ENTERIC FEVER.—Cases of Enteric fever occurred in every month of the year except January and February. Two were reported in March, three in April, two in May, one in June, two in July, one in August, two in September, one each in October and November, and three in December—a total of 19 for the year. Two were imported, defective drains were found associated with others, and no local conditions could be discovered to account for the remainder. Two patients were removed to the Hospital, and two deaths were referred to this disease for the year. Sealed pails are now left at infected houses for the collection of excreta. These are regularly removed and the contents disinfected and buried under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector, where they cannot be a future source of danger.

INFLUENZA.—Influenza appeared once more in January. It continued mild throughout February, but immediately after the break-up of the long severe frost it became much more prevalent and severe. It declined during April, and disappeared about the middle of May. No deaths were directly referred to it.

DIPHTHERIA.—There were two cases of diphtheria in 1895, one in January and one in February. Both proved fatal. One was a child only a few weeks old, and a bad cellar drain allowing the entrance of sewer gas into the house was discovered.

WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply was constant during the year. On the subject of its quality I append the following copies of reports :—

SPECIAL REPORT.

**To the Chairman and Members of the Rawmarsh
Urban District Council.**

GENTLEMEN,

I have to submit to you Mr. Allen's reports on two samples of water recently forwarded to him for analysis.

Sample No. 3 was taken from a private well in use at Rawmarsh, and was known to be polluted with sewage which had passed from a choked drain through an overflow pipe into the well.

That marked No. 4 was a sample of the water supplied to this Council by the Rotherham Corporation and was taken from a tap in a house in Rawmarsh Hill.

You will note that although the figures differ under several heads the Analyst's opinion of both waters is stated in almost identical language.

He affirms that they are both contaminated with drainage, and advises that their use as drinking water should be abandoned.

Were you in a position to supply a good potable water I should at once have asked that this well be closed, but under the circumstances I think I would not be justified in taking any action beyond advising the removal of the overflow pipe and the thorough cleansing of the well. Subsequent analysis might prove the water although still objectionable to be better than your own public supply. For the same reason I feel that my action regarding other private wells most suspiciously situated in the parish is unfortunately restricted.

It is very evident that anything which has been done with a view to improve the Rotherham Water Supply has been ineffectual and that the inhabitants are still liable to suffer from grave epidemics of disease such as occurred in 1891.

The people should be warned to continue boiling the water before using it until publicly notified that the precaution is unnecessary.

It would be inconsistent with my duty to have such a serious report in my possession without communicating with the Local Government Board and the County Council.

It is therefore my intention to forward to these authorities copies of this and the analyst's report.

JAMES PICKEN,

*Medical Officer of Health,
Rawmarsh Urban Sanitary District.*

Parkgate, Jan. 16th, 1895.



PUBLIC ANALYST'S LABORATORY,

67, SURREY STREET, SHEFFIELD,

JANUARY 10TH, 1895.

Report on a Sample of Drinking Water, received from the Rawmarsh Local Board of Health, on December 31st, 1894. Sample Mark :—"No. 3 taken 2.25 p.m., 31/12/94."

Physical Characters :—

SUSPENDED MATTER, trace.

APPEARANCE of a Column two feet long, clear, colourless.

TASTE, slightly saline. ODOUR, none.

On Analysis, the sample gave the following results :—

Grains per gallon.	{	<p>TOTAL SOLID MATTER, 58.80; which lost on IGNITION, 8.00 g.</p> <p>CHLORINE, 4.30 ; equal to SODIUM CHLORIDE, 7.09 grs.</p> <p>NITROGEN in oxidised forms, 2.10 ; equal to NITRIC ACID (anhydrous), 8.10 grs.</p> <p>POISONOUS METALS (Lead, &c), none.</p>
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DEGREES OF HARDNESS, 40.0. [Each degree of hardness represents a soap-destroying power equivalent to one grain of chalk per gallon.]

Parts per million.	{	<p>REDUCING POWER, 0.46. [Representing the Oxygen absorbed by the organic and other oxidisable matters in one million parts of water.]</p> <p>FREE and UREAL AMMONIA, 0.04 parts per million.</p> <p>ALBUMINOID AMMONIA, 0.16 parts per million.</p>
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These results are not satisfactory. They show the water to have suffered contamination by drainage of some sort. The greater part of the polluting matter has subsequently undergone spontaneous destruction by oxidation, but such a water must always be regarded with grave suspicion, and its use for drinking should be abandoned.

ALFRED H. ALLEN.

PUBLIC ANALYST'S LABORATORY,

67, SURREY STREET, SHEFFIELD.

JANUARY 10TH, 1895.

TOWN'S WATER.

Report of a Sample of Drinking Water received from the Rawmarsh Local Board of Health, on December 31st, 1894. Sample Mark: "No. 4 taken 3 p m. 31/12/94."

Physical Characters :—

SUSPENDED MATTER, trace.

APPEARANCE of a Column two feet long, clear, colourless.

TASTE, normal. ODOUR, none.

On Analysis, the sample gave the following results :—

Grains per gallon.	{	<p>TOTAL SOLID MATTER, 21·28; which lost on IGNITION, 3·92 g.</p> <p>CHLORINE, 1·80; equal to SODIUM CHLORIDE, 62·96 grs.</p> <p>NITROGEN in oxidised forms, 1·17; equal to NITRIC ACID (anhydrous), 4·50 grs.</p> <p>POISONOUS METALS (Lead, &c.), none.</p>
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DEGREES OF HARDNESS, 14·0. [Each degree of hardness represents a soap-destroying power equivalent to one grain of chalk per gallon.]

Parts per million.	{	<p>REDUCING POWER, 0·94. [Representing the Oxygen absorbed by the organic and other oxidisable matters in one million parts of water.]</p> <p>FREE and UREAL AMMONIA, 0·05 parts per million.</p> <p>ALBUMINOID AMMONIA, 0·20 parts per million.</p>
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These results are not satisfactory. They show the water to have suffered contamination by drainage of some sort. The greater part of the polluting matter has subsequently undergone spontaneous destruction by oxidation, but objectionable traces of readily changeable organic matter still exist in the water, the use of which for drinking should be abandoned.

ALFRED H. ALLEN.

EXTRACT FROM REPORT FOR MARCH, 1895.

On May 16th, I presented to you a special report on the analysis by Mr. Allen, County Analyst, of two samples of water, one of which was taken from a tap in Rawmarsh Hill. I felt it my duty, and the occasion an opportune one, to again advise you to warn consumers to boil the water before drinking it, and to do so till publicly notified that the precaution was unnecessary. The first part of the recommendation was carried out by the posting of bills over the parish. I am aware, although for reasons best known to yourselves, I have no official knowledge of it, that you have since then submitted samples to another analyst, and have allowed the publication in the public press of his opinion that "none of the figures point to any serious amount of pollution," and the waters are "fit and wholesome for drinking purposes and quite up to the average of the water supplies." As I think this favourable chemical report may lead many people astray and cause them to ignore the warning referred to, I must tell you I still maintain it is unsafe to drink your present water supply unboiled. I need not detail now my reasons for this opinion, but I may point out to you that the figures of the analysis as reported in the press are worse than those yielded by the water in the autumn of 1891, when, whether the figures pointed to any serious amount of pollution or not, it was conclusively proved to be disseminating enteric poison all over the district.

The well from which sample No. 3 was taken has since been closed.

Annual Report of Sanitary Inspector.

RAWMARSH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL, 1895.

GENTLEMEN,

During the year 1895 I have reported to the Sanitary Committee of your Council, at their monthly meetings, that notices have been served for the abatement of the following nuisances :—

	NOTICES.		
Defective and Choked Drains	36
„ Privies and Ashpits	27
„ Spouting, causing dampness to dwellings	8
„ W.C.s	7
„ Chimneys and Roofs to Dwellings--dangerous	8
„ Sinks and Sink Pipes	7
Repairs to Dwelling-houses	11
Percolation of Water into Cellars	6
Offensive accumulations	5
Pollution of Stream by Privy	1
Keeping Pigs so as to be a nuisance	1
Insufficient Privy Accomodation	1
W.C. substituted for Privies	1
Untrapped Drains in Cellars	2
Fill up disused Well in Cellars of dwellings			2

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All of which have been complied with or are promised attention.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL OFFICES have been put in a good sanitary condition, earthenware trough having replaced wooden trough, with proper syphon, traps, and automatic flush cisterns. Automatic W.C.s have been placed to six cottages in Bear Tree Road, and 8 W.C.s substituted for privies in Terrace Road; 8 W.C.s have also been placed in 8 cottages in Church Street. Altogether, 20 W.C.s have been put in place of 20 privies to 42 houses during the year. Mr. Bool has put 8 of Duckett's self-acting automatic W.C.s flushed with slop-water, to the 12 new houses, Green Lane, Rawmarsh.

PEASHILL LANE has been much improved by the pulling down of the old open ashpits, and the re-building of five additional privies (giving one privy accommodation for two houses instead of three houses as per the bye-law of the Council), and covered ashpits.

RUBBLE DRAINS have been taken out in Church Street, Stocks' Lane, and Green Lane, Rawmarsh; Holmes' Yard, Red Lion Yard, and Aldwarke Road.

The sewer in Lloyd Street has been relaid at a lower level from Bethel Church to head of Street, and is now effectually draining the houses which were complained of previously. The connections from drains to sewer were all very badly made, no junctions whatever.

DRAINS have been tested with smoke and other tests where required, and defects thus proved have been remedied.

Proceedings were taken before Rotherham Bench of magistrates, and an order made by them "for the draining of stables in Bear Tree Road, or to cease using said buildings as stables," which latter course has been adopted.

The land near Little Bridge has been covered by water a good portion of the year. Pumping was resorted to and kept at work from May 17th to Aug. 23rd, when the old filter beds were dismantled. The sewage of Parkgate Section has been flowing through parish culvert since that time.

The large accumulation of water in the disused Brick Ponds near Little Bridge and lands adjoining unless removed will be a standing menace to the health of the district. There does not appear to be means of conveyance away of the surface water in the filling up of subsided lands, consequently the accumulation of water named. I have had many complaints from Dilks' Buildings, Turner street, and Thomas street, of the smell from these waters in dry weather.

COWSHEDS & DAIRIES.

Six persons have been registered as purveyors of milk under the Cowsheds and Dairies Act. Six persons who were on the Register have given up milk trade, leaving 21 persons on the register.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There are 17 registered Slaughterhouses in your District, no change having been made in the register. One application was made for a licence but the premises were unsuitable, as it contained a large oven for baking purposes, and was also deficient in light, ventilation, and drainage, which the person applying for licence was not disposed to provide, and therefore withdrew the application.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

There have been the following Infectious Diseases notified during the year :

		Houses.
238	Cases of Scarlet Fever	158
19	„ Typhoid	... 17
23	„ Measles	... 19
2	„ Diphtheria	... 2
1	„ Small Pox	... 1
<hr/>		<hr/>
278	— in	197

There have been removed to Infectious Hospital

4	Cases Scarlet Fever.
2	„ Typhoid.
1	„ Small Pox.
<hr/>	
7	„

Pails have been sent whenever Typhoid has been reported, to prevent spread of the disease by the ashpit.

FOOD ANALYSIS.

Seven samples of Milk have been submitted to Mr. Allen, County Analyst, with the following results :—

Three “Were of suspiciously poor quality, but not sufficiently bad to justify their positive condemnation as adulterated.”

Three other samples “were genuine.”

One of “Fair average quality.”

REFUSE REMOVAL.

There have been removed during 1895 :—

	Loads.	Ashpits.	Days.
By Board's Carts in 5 months	...1509	646	69
By Contractor, Geo. Emery, 9 months	4923	2096	210
Total
	6432	2742	279

This is 673 loads of refuse, and 519 ashpits cleansed in 4 days more work than in 1895.

The present Contractor has done his work better than most of the previous Contractors but I am still of opinion this portion of the Sanitary Department being so precarious is best in the hands of the Council direct : for the health of the district depends very largely on speedy removal of its refuse. The last winter has been the mildest season since I have been Sanitary Inspector.

VISITATION.

I have visited the yards and premises of 9,500 houses during the year, including factories and workshops many times, accompanied by the Medical Officer of Health.

JAMES WHITEHEAD,

Sanitary Inspector.

I have regularly attended the Sanitary Committee or Monthly Council meetings and read reports on the birth-rate, mortality, and general health of the parish. Monthly returns of the diseases prevalent in the district were sent to the Medical Officer of the County Council.

Three special reports were presented during the year, one on the water supply dated Jan. 16th, one on an outbreak of measles at Ryecroft and Sandhill dated February 13th, and one on a case of smallpox dated June 11th.

I have inspected the district generally accompanied by the Sanitary Inspector. Visits were as usual made to houses in which infectious disease existed, inquiries made as to the origin of the disease and the circumstances associated with it, instructions given with a view to prevent it spreading, and sanitary defects noted. In December, I inspected the Dale Road Boys' and Girls' Schools in connection with the prevalence of scarlet fever at Rawmarsh, and instructed the Sanitary Inspector to call on the managers to thoroughly cleanse them.

I attended before the Rotherham Bench of Magistrates and gave evidence as to stables in Bear Tree Road which were without drains, when an order was made to drain the stables or cease using them as such.

The sanitary work done is shown in detail in the Sanitary Inspector's report. From that report it will be seen that considerable improvements have been accomplished during the year, in the relaying of Lloyd Street sewer, the removing of dangerous rubble drains, the covering of open ashpits, and the substituting of W.C.s for objectionable privies. All drains 10 years old or more are invariably found to be defective, the pipes being broken or without sockets, or the junctions consisting of a hole broken in the one pipe and the end of the other pipe led into it.

Ryecroft has at last undergone a happy transformation by the making of two streets there, but New Street and Infirmary Road, Parkgate, and Peas Hill Lane, Rawmarsh, still remain the same disgraceful New Street, Infirmary Road, and Peas Hill Lane.

In my last annual report I expressed the hope that you had permanently abandoned the contract system for the removal of nightsoil and rubbish, but within a week or two that hope was blasted, and during nine months of last year this work was done by a contractor. I have not much reason to complain of the way in which he did the work, but as "one swallow does not make a summer," so one good contractor does not prove the contract system to be a sound one. I need not enter now into the arguments against that system, as I have dealt with them in previous reports, but I may point out to you that the proper and prompt collection, and the disposal of such refuse, is intimately connected with the health of the people, which should be your chief concern, and it naturally follows that it should be under your own direct control as much as your gasworks and highways. In this matter economy cannot be reckoned in pounds, shillings, and pence. That this view has once more prevailed and the contractor dispensed with is a matter in which the inhabitants are to be congratulated.

The Parkgate sewage was diverted 6 months ago from the ponds between the M. S. & L. Railway and Rotherham Road, and at present, owing perhaps to the amount of storm water, there is no perceptible odour from them. What may be the effect of dry warm weather and the water becoming stagnant remains to be seen or perhaps felt.

The great majority of the street sewers still remain unventilated.

I have again to ask your serious consideration of the following recommendations :—

- 1—The adoption of stringent bye-laws regulating the deposit and removal of manure, offal, &c., from slaughter-houses, or the erection of a public slaughter house.
- 2—The erection of a destructor or other efficient provision for the disposal of nightsoil and rubbish.
- 3—The adoption of the Infectious Disease Notification Act, 1889.

I have on several occasions urged the adoption of this Act in preference to your present system of voluntary notification by the medical attendant which does not secure the full advantages of the principle. The President of the Local Government Board stated in the House of Commons, on February 24th, that it was in force in 814 Urban and 585 Rural Districts. leaving 202 Urban and 94 Rural Districts in which it was not in operation. The population, according to the last census of the districts in which notification was compulsory, was 27,000,000 out of a total population of 29,000,000. He was proposing to communicate with the authorities which had not adopted the Act, and he hoped the number of districts in which it was not in force would be considerably diminished in the course of the present year.

I hope Rawmarsh will join the majority.

- 4—The adoption of the Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.
- 5—The adoption of a new code of General Bye-Laws and of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890.

In nearly every Annual Report I have referred at length to this subject. The great importance, especially in an industrial and rapidly growing community, of properly controlling the erection and environments of new dwelling houses and the laying out of new streets, does not seem to be fully realised, or at any rate I fail to see any practical proof that it is. By continuing to allow the building of dwelling-houses in backyards and in situations where there are no streets or proper approaches, and by want of proper supervision in the laying-out of land set apart for building purposes, necessitating as in a late instance

the making of a "jennel" in an important part of the town, you are creating serious public inconveniences and difficulties with which future Councils may have to deal, perhaps at considerable expense to the ratepayers. One building erected not long ago is a distinct infringement of the 38th section of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890. The objections to the plan were pointed out to you by your Surveyor when it was presented to you, but it was allowed to pass.

Accompanying this report are Forms K² 3 (A) and K² 11 (B), duly filled up in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Board, and Table C provided by the Medical Officer of the County Council.

JAMES PICKEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Parkgate, March 17th, 1896.



